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The Cat's
ELEGY

GELETT BURGESS
BURGES JOHNSON

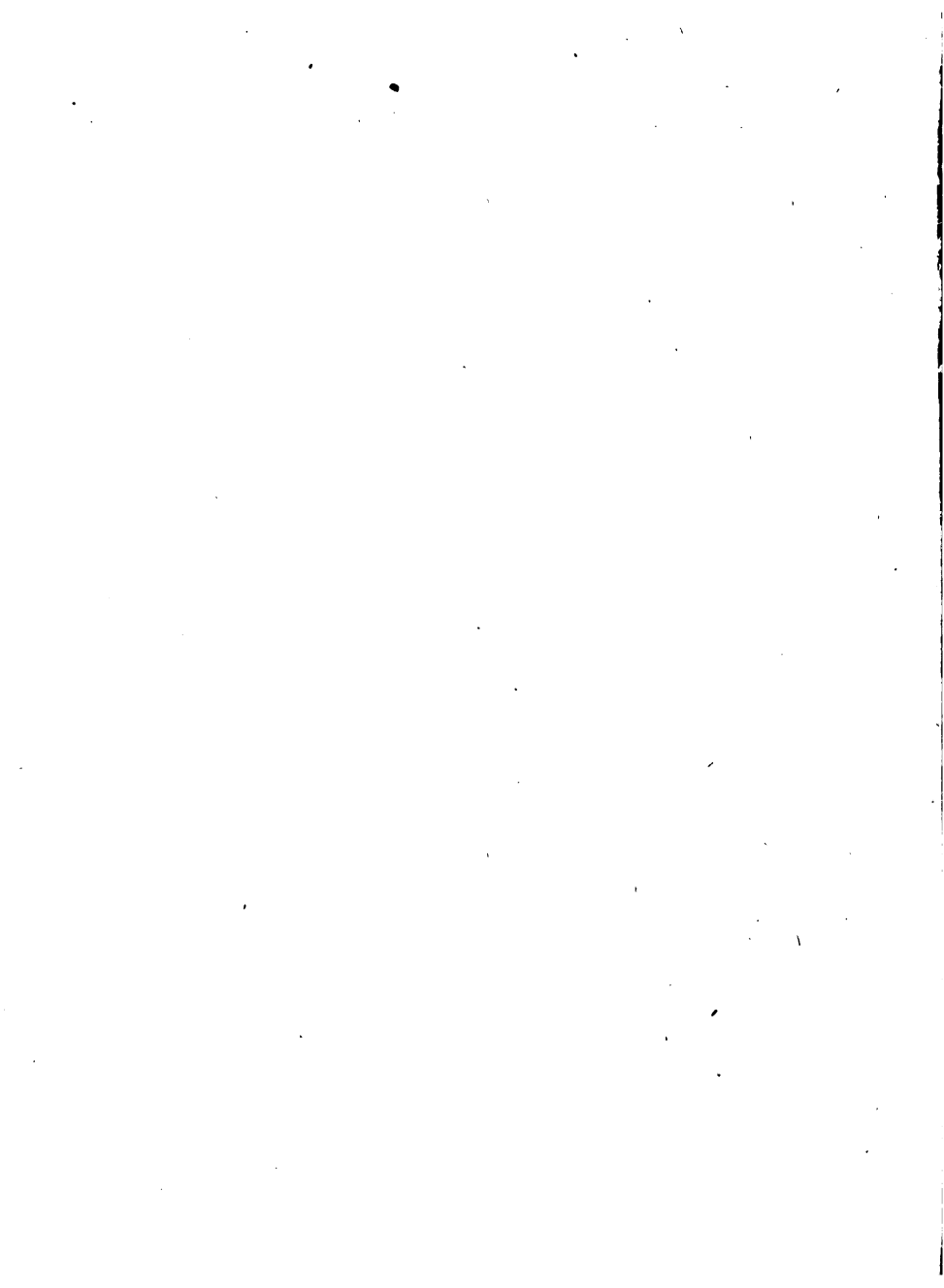
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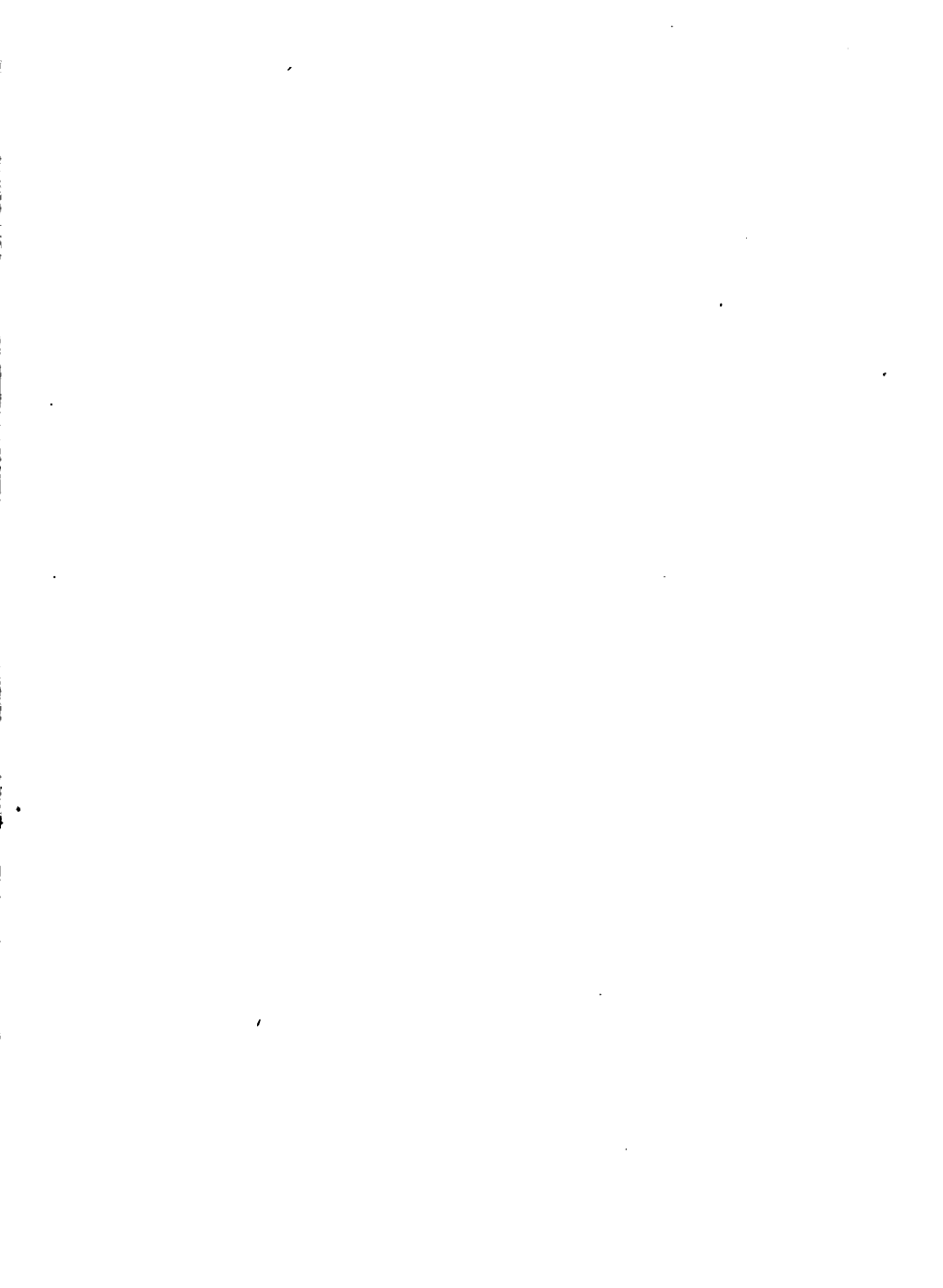


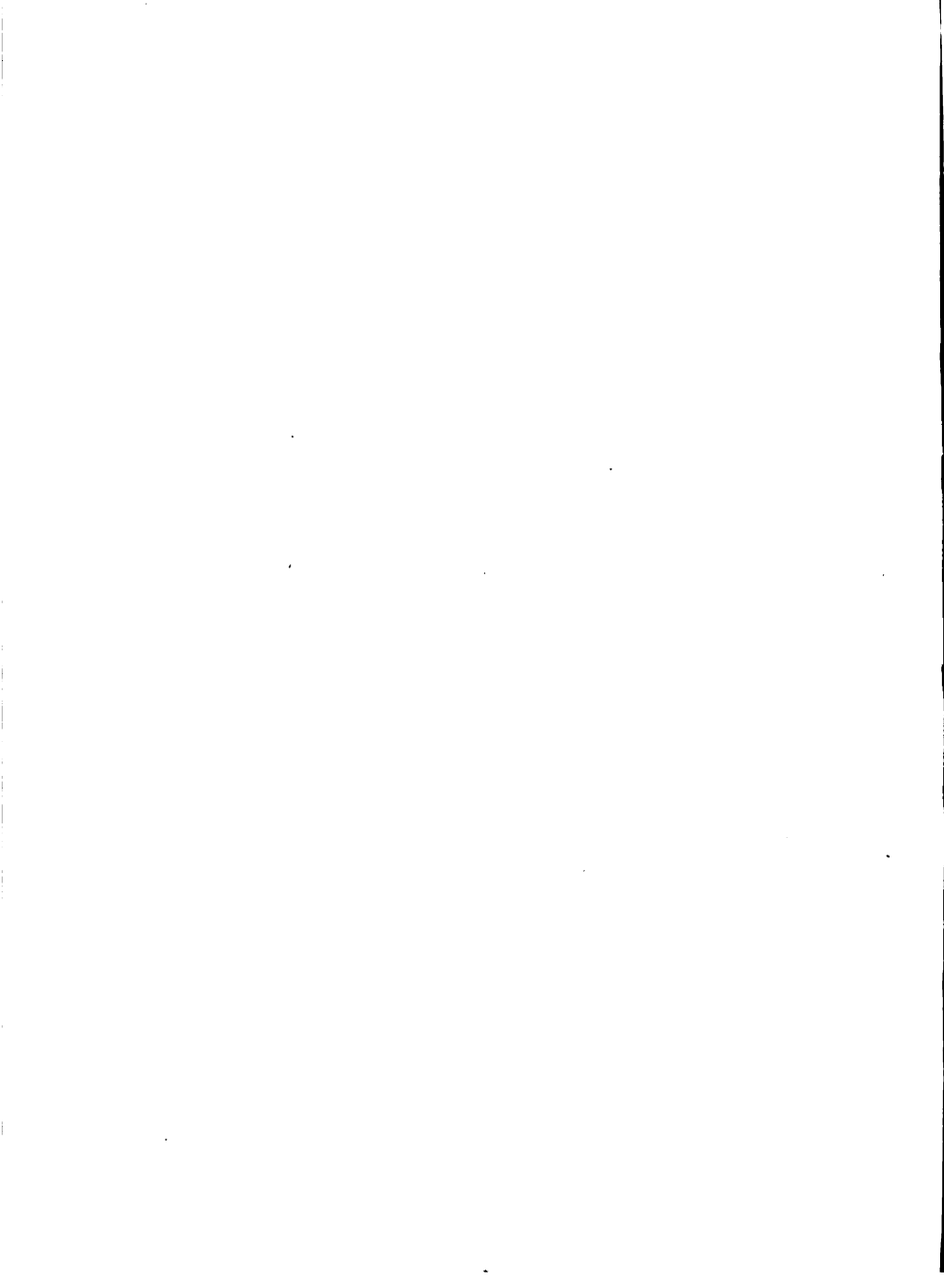
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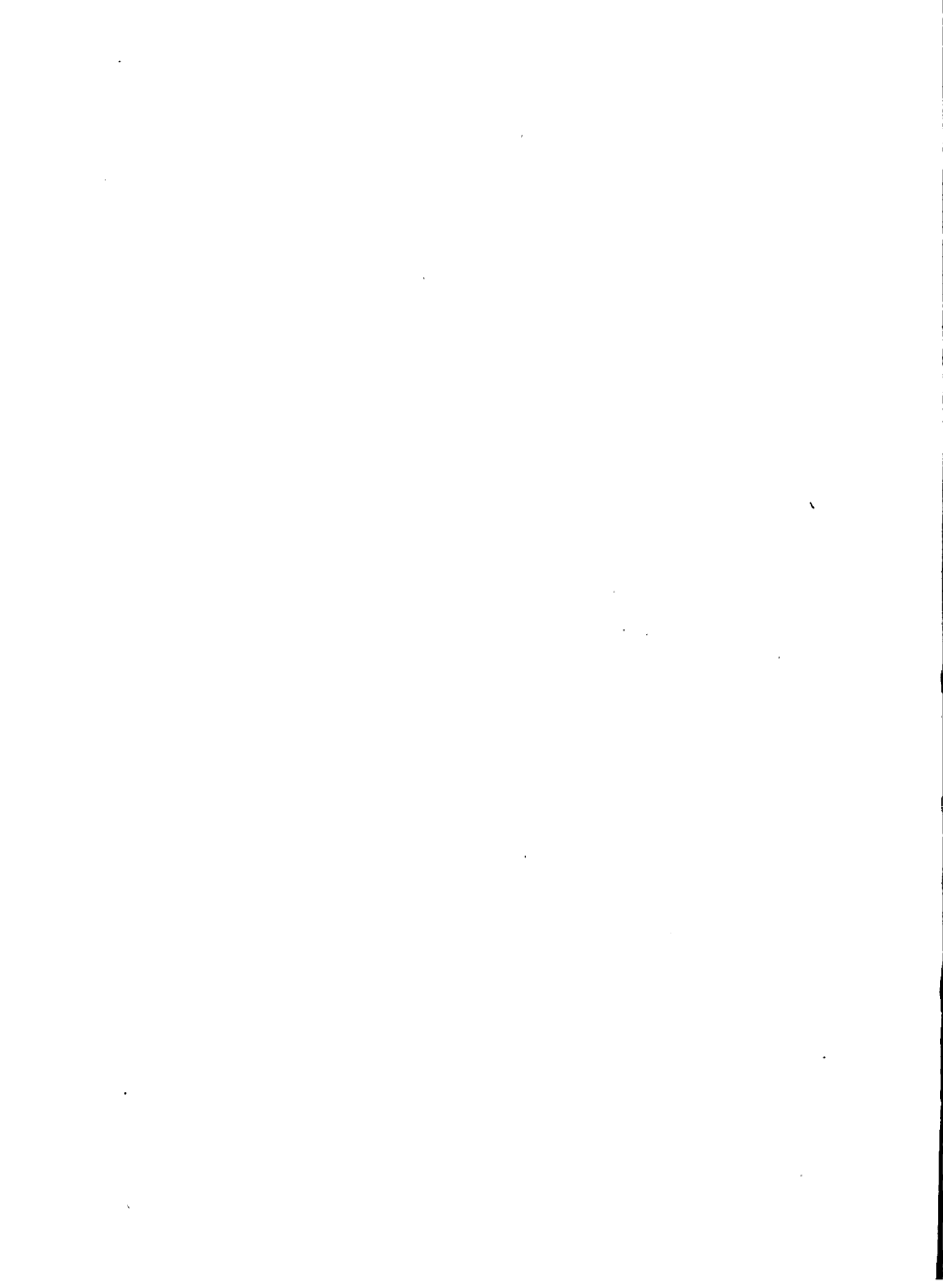








The Cat's Elegy



THE CAT'S ELEGY

By
GELETT BURGESS
and
BURGES JOHNSON



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1913

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Published March, 1913

TO WHOM
IT MAY COME

The Cat's Elegy

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Day of
Calypso



The
Cat's
Elegy

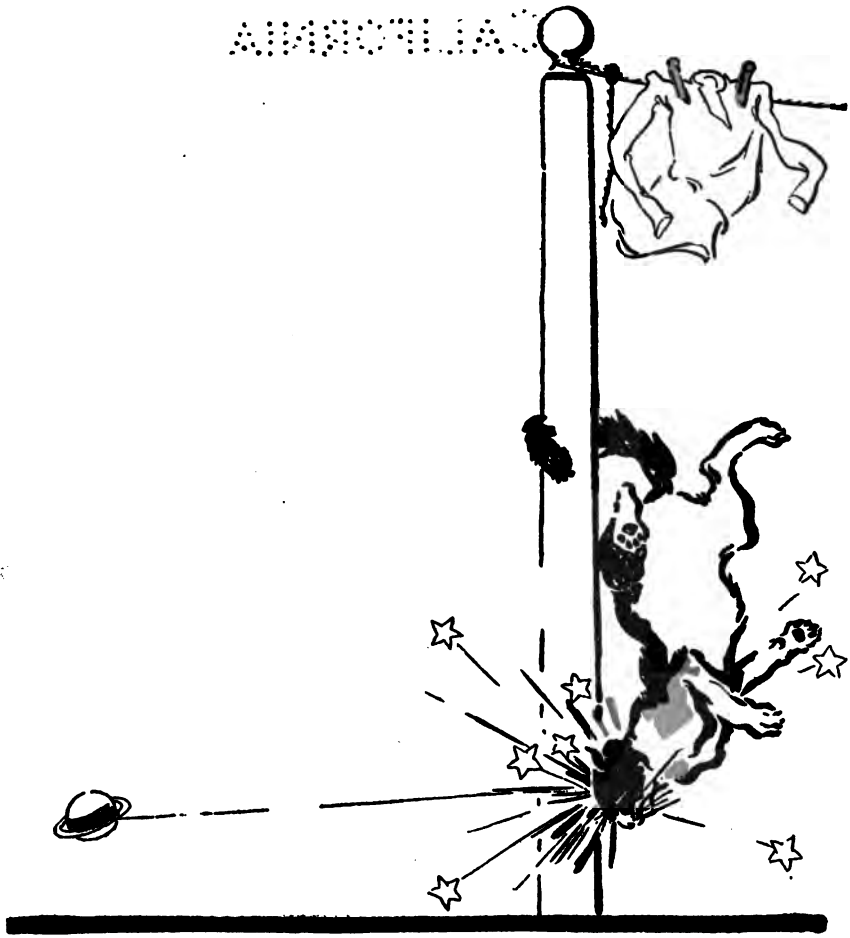
I



THE tea-bell tolls for Nell
to pass the tray,
The glowing cook winds
slowly up the clock,
The ashman homeward wends his
weary way
And leaves a trail of cinders round
the block.



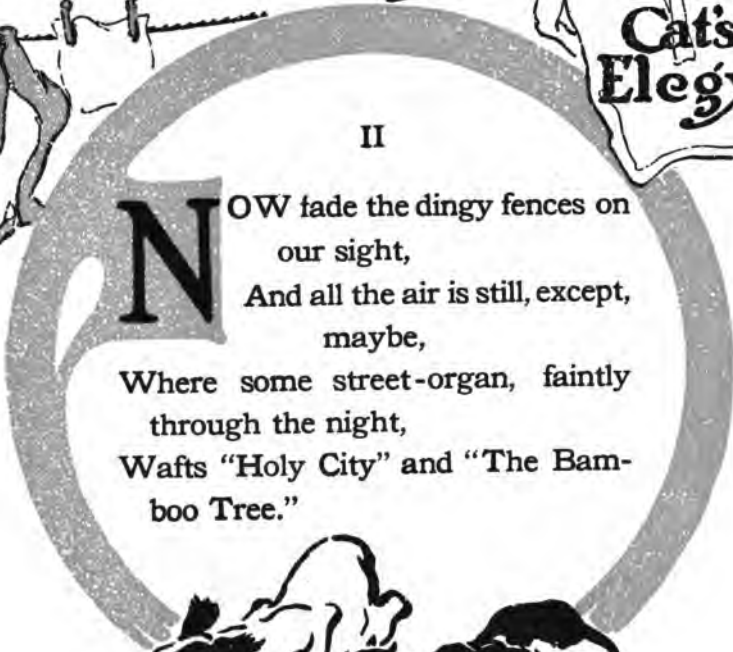
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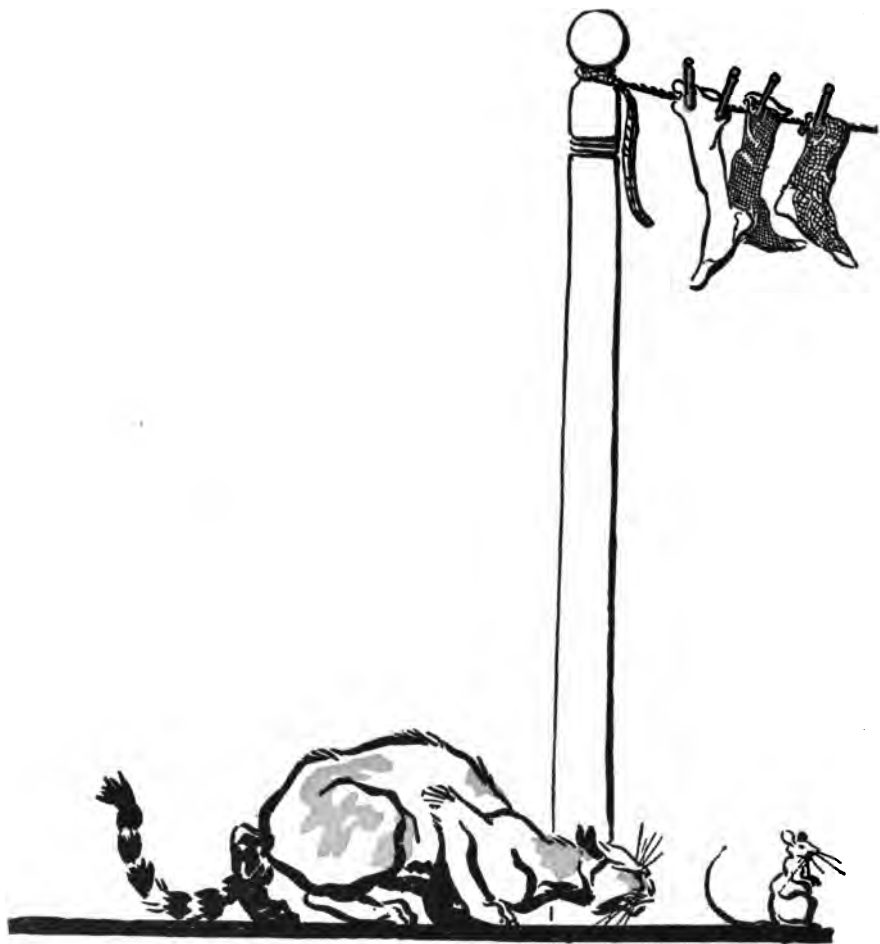
The
Cat's
Elegy

II



NOW fade the dingy fences on
our sight,
And all the air is still, except,
maybe,
Where some street-organ, faintly
through the night,
Wafts "Holy City" and "The Bam-
boo Tree."





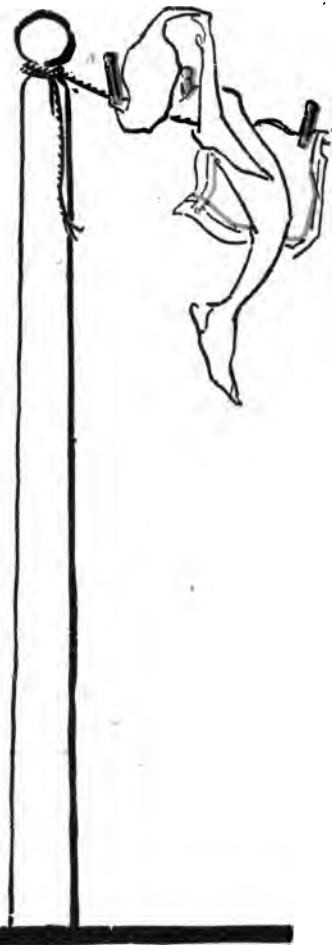


The Cat's Elegy

III

SA VE that from yonder
sparsely slated roof
A moping Tom doth moan-
ingly complain
(While other felines darkly hold
aloof)
That his Maria lucklessly
was slain.





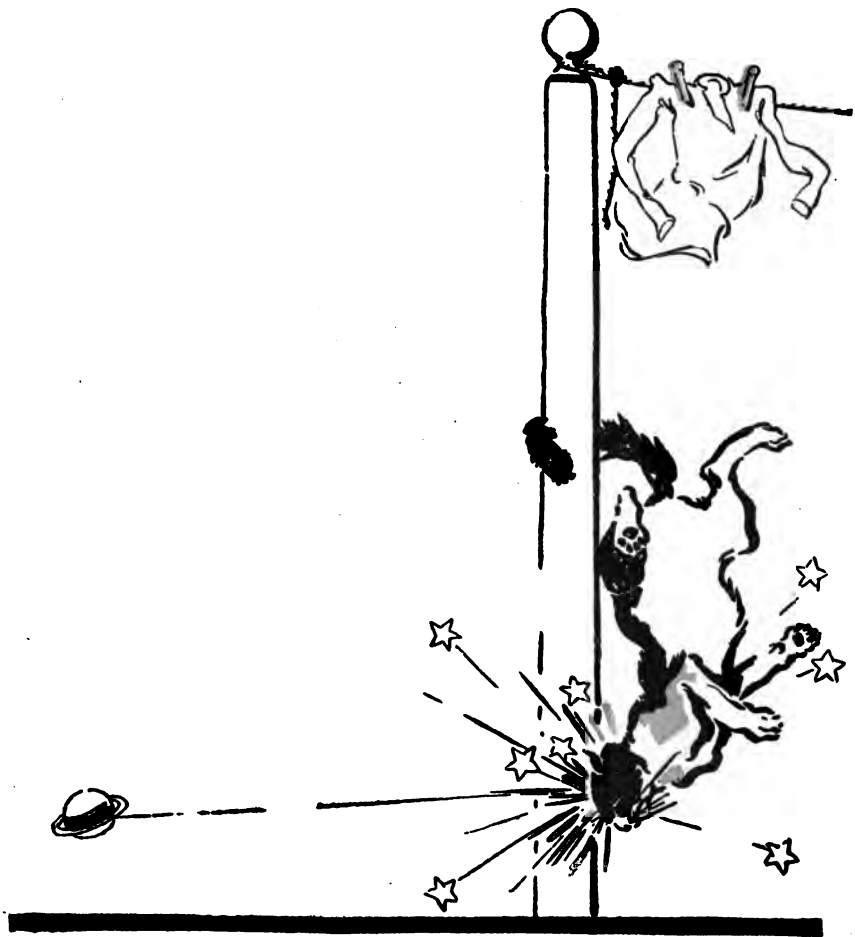


The Cat's Elegy

IV

BENEATH the shade yon
dying pear tree sheds,
Where rest tomato cans on
ashy heaps,
Where cast-off garments line the
pansy beds,
The flattened form of poor Maria
sleeps.





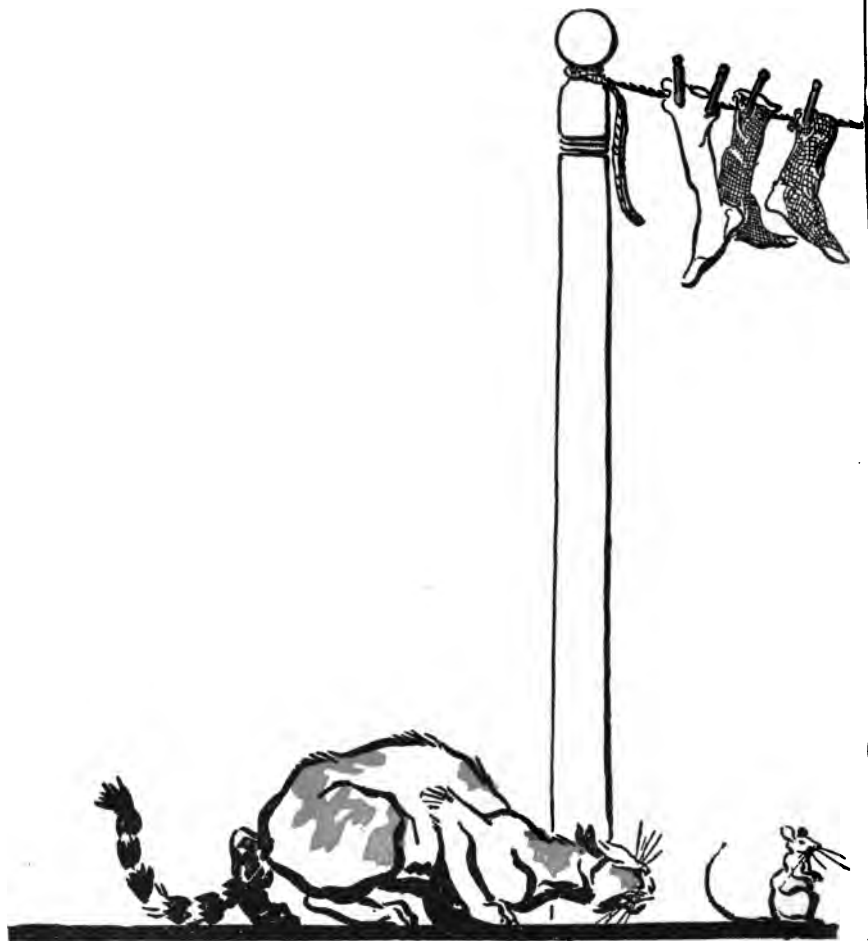


The
Cat's
Elegy

V

THE wheezy call of milkmen
in the morn,
The cook's insistent, matuti-
nal grouch,
The scissors grinder's harsh and rau-
cous horn
No more shall rouse her from her
weedy couch.







The
Cat's
Elegy

VI

FOR her no more shall wave
the threatening broom,
Or busy housewife scat her
from the chair,

No children run to chase her from
the room,

Or pampered dogs besiege her in
her lair.



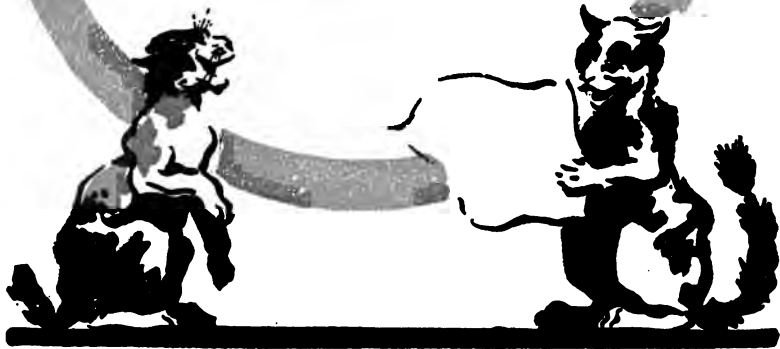


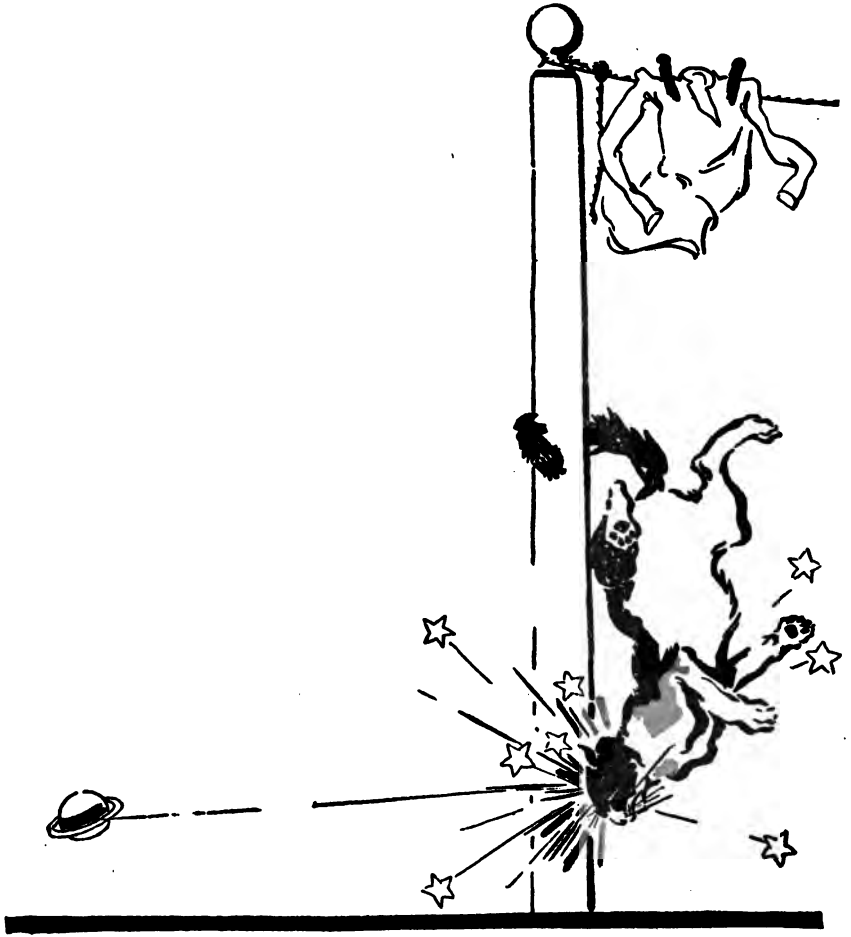


The Cat's Elegy

VII

OFT sought she out appointed
rendezvous,
In dalliance spent the fair-
est of her days,
Or nightly studied, with her art in
view,
The acoustic properties of alley-ways.





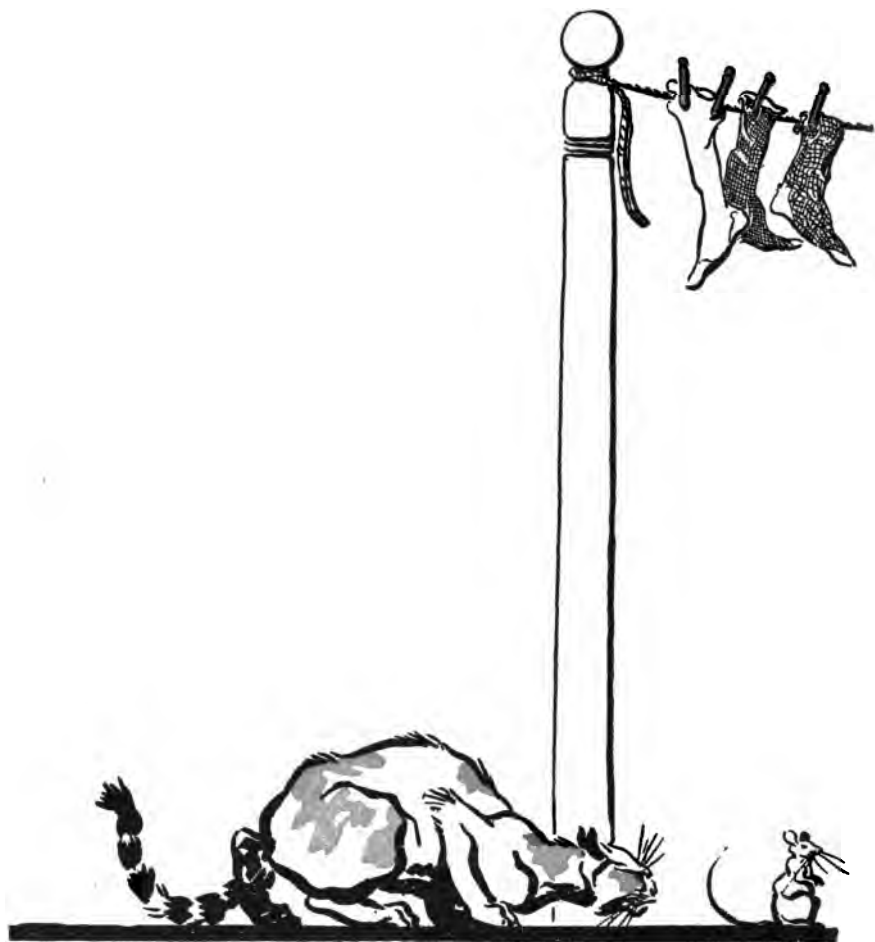


The
Cat's
Elegy

VIII

OFT did the predatory cur
rejoice
To drive her, quivering, up
this lonely tree;
How jocund did she raise nocturnal
voice!
How cursed the lodgers, kept awake
at three!





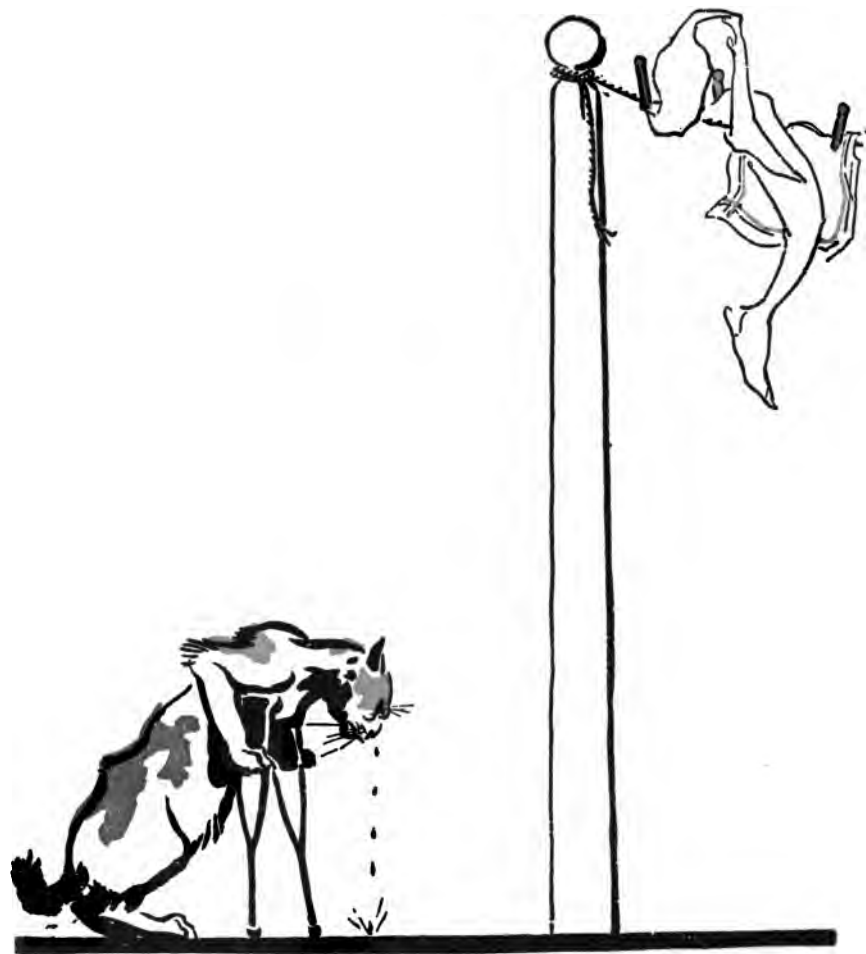


The Cat's Elegy

IX

LET not some grooméd lap
cat e'er decry
The humble realm of that
backyard obscure—
The battered gate, the clothesline
whence there fly
The short and simple flannels of
the poor.





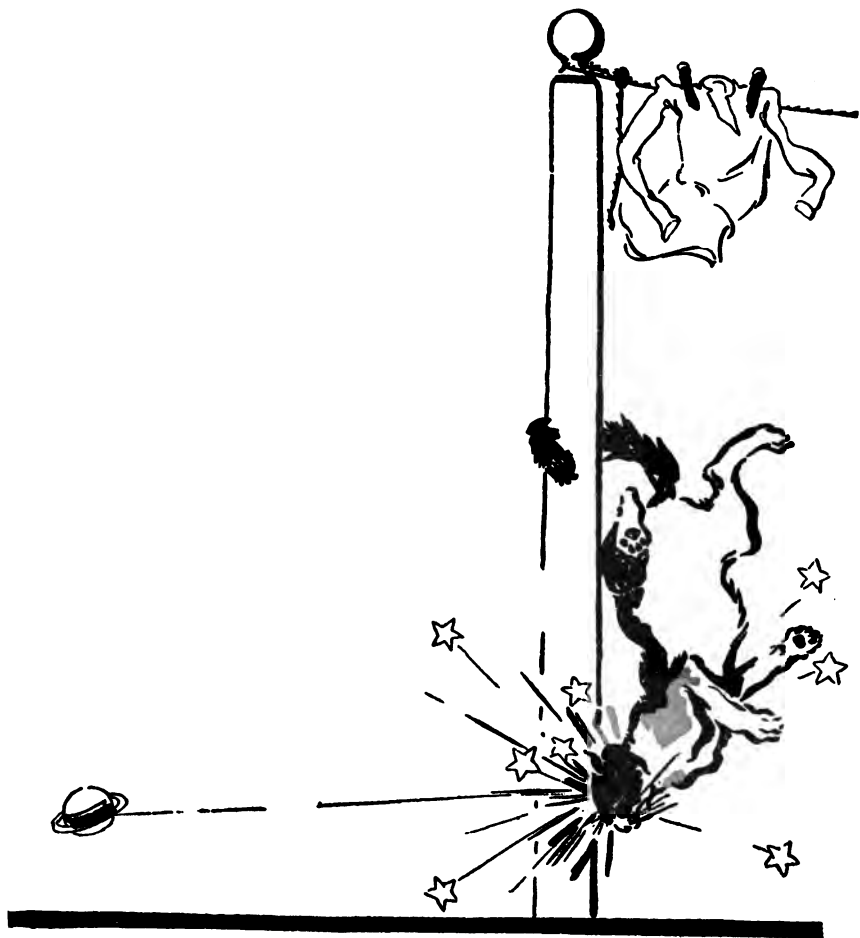


The Cat's Elegy

X

THE boast of Tortoise-shell,
the pomp of Manx,
The Persian, bearing pedi-
gree profound,
All dread alike the catcher's nimble
shanks—
The public highways lead but to the
pound.







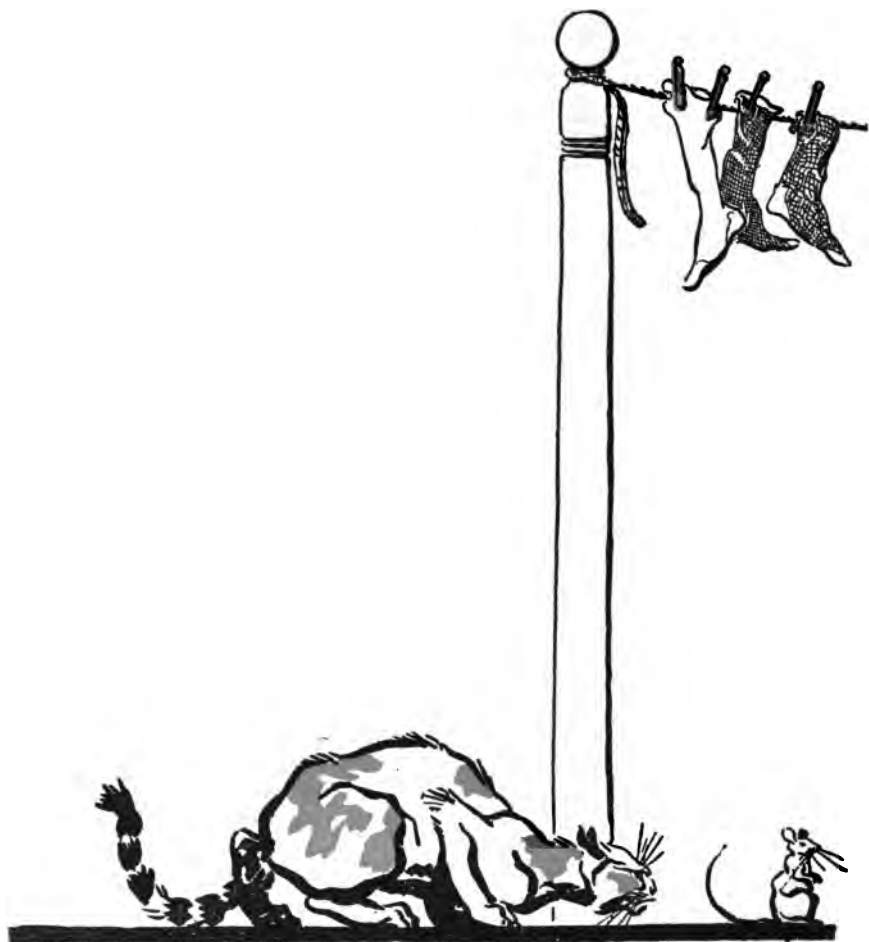
The
Cat's
Elegy

XI

FULL many a nightly prowler,
gaunt and lean;
Has filled this alley with his
music rare;

Full many a cat is born to howl un-
seen,
And waste his sweetness on the city
air.








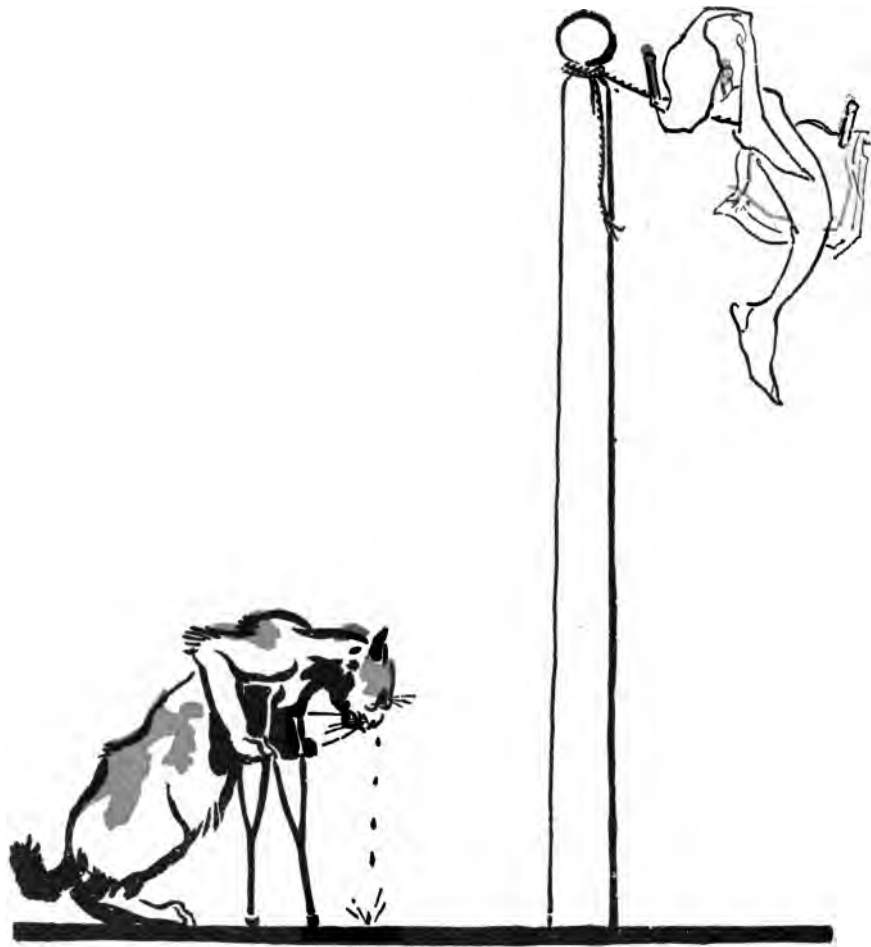
The
Cat's
Elegy

XII



NOR you, ye proud, impute to
him the sin,
Who in his nightshirt did
his window raise,
And, hurling down his missile at the
din,
Ended the joyance of her
heartfelt lays!



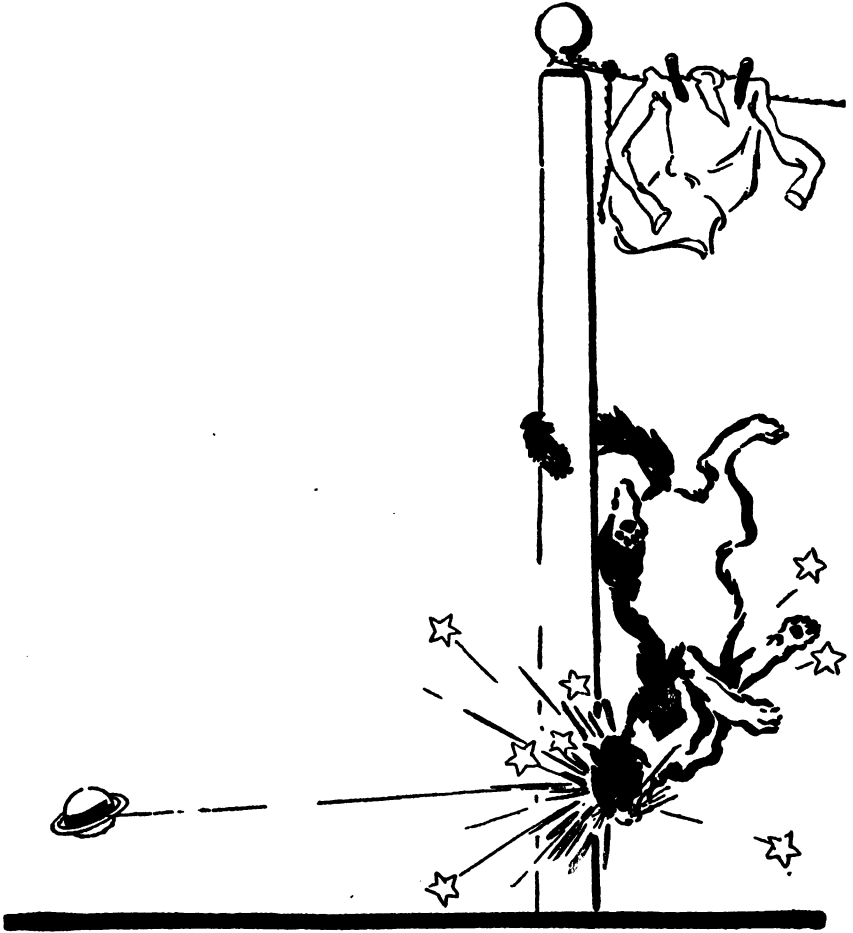




The Cat's Elegy

XIII

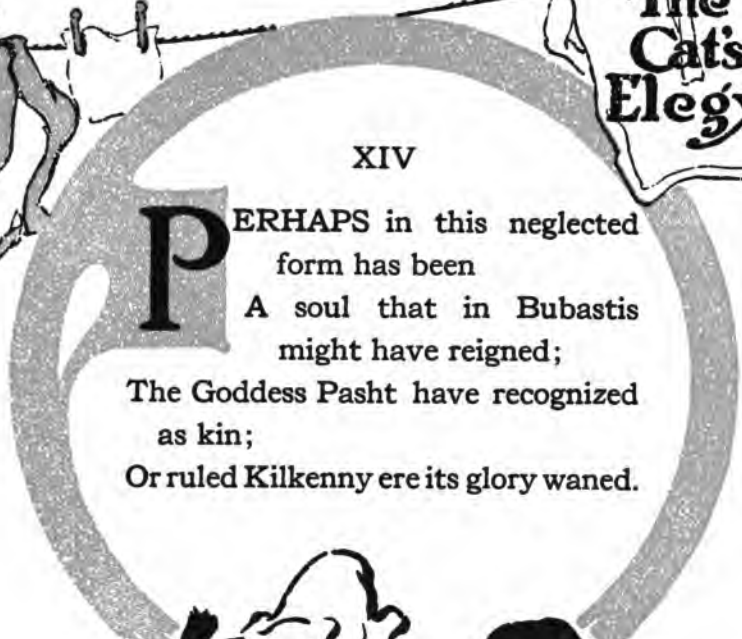
RETURNING from some
animated bust,
Back to his mansion, pale
and sick at heart,
Maria's voice provoked his latent
lust
For blood; she fell a victim to her art.





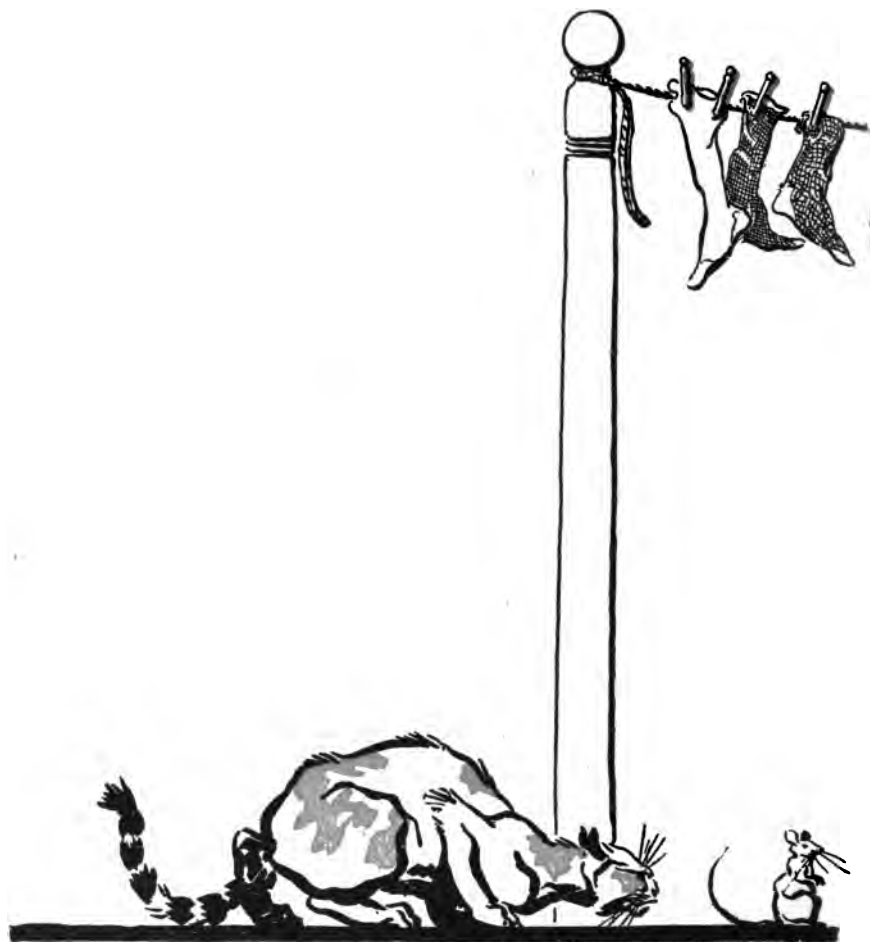
The
Cat's
Elegy

XIV



PERHAPS in this neglected
form has been
A soul that in Bubastis
might have reigned;
The Goddess Pasht have recognized
as kin;
Or ruled Kilkenny ere its glory waned.







The Cat's Elegy

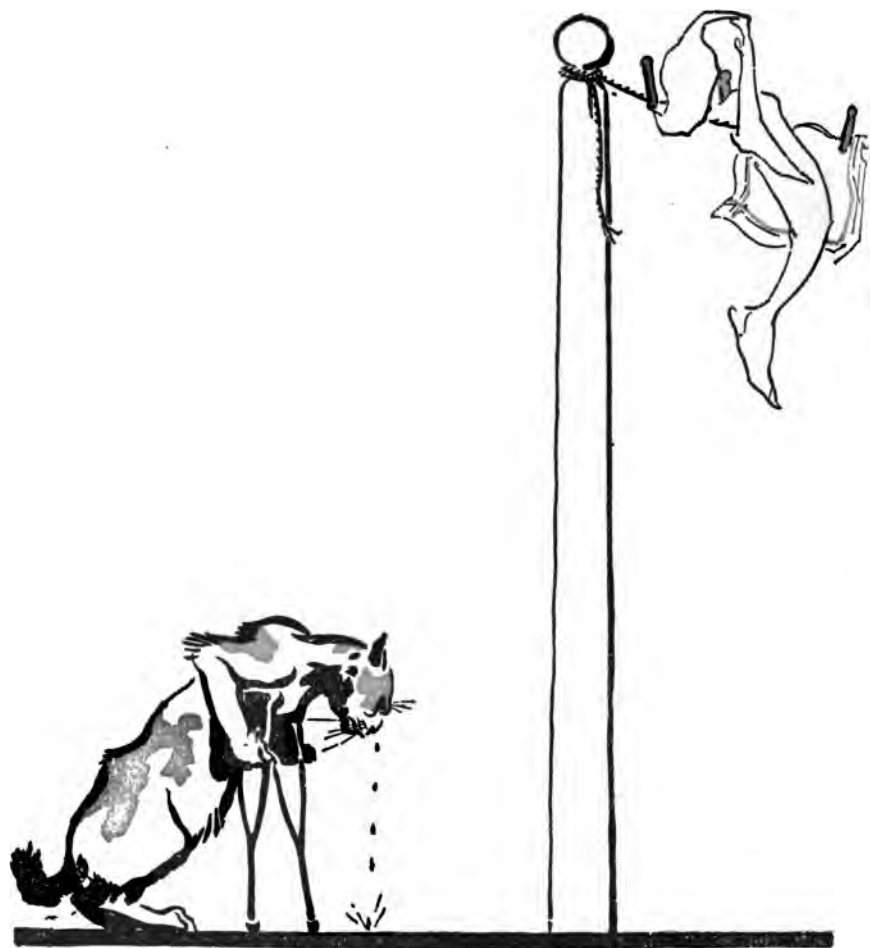
XV

FAR from the madding
crowd she was not feased,
The while her vagrom fan-
cies made her stray

Along the sequestered alley, where
she raised

The nightly noisy tenor of
her lay.

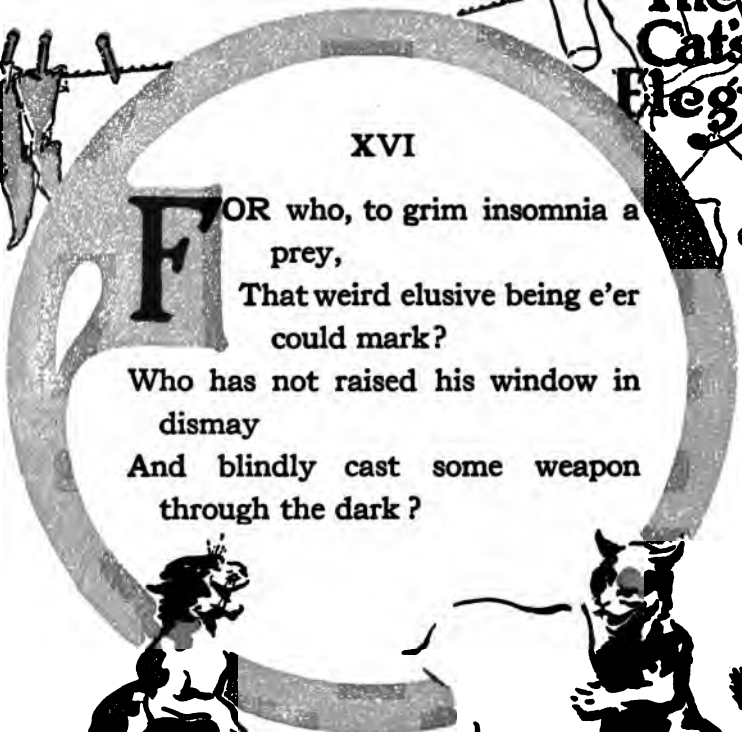






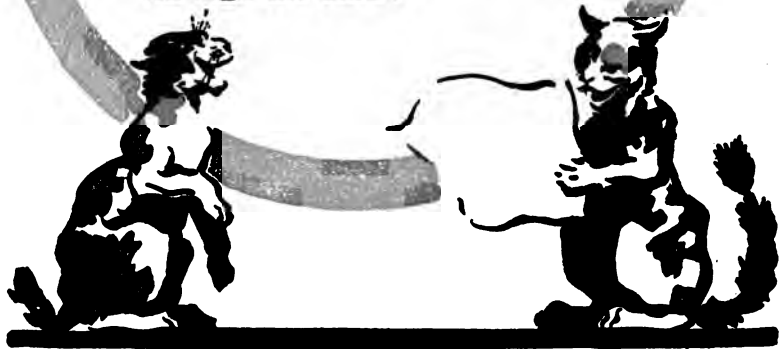
The
Cat's
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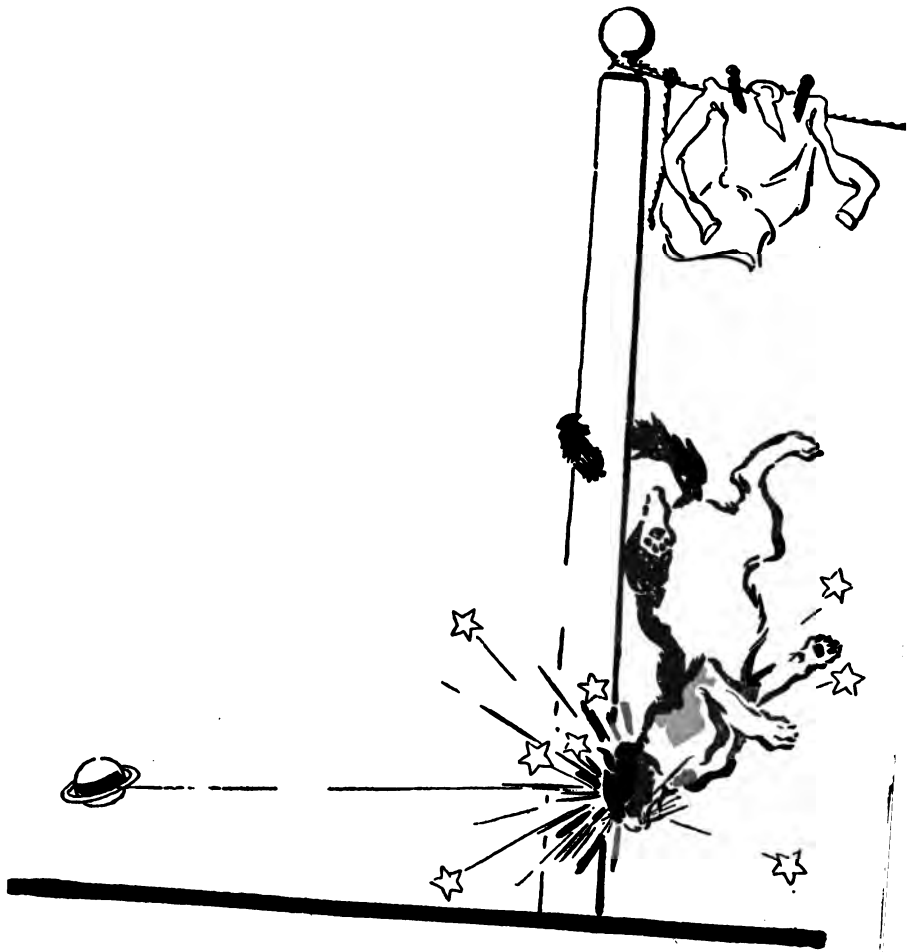
XVI



FOR who, to grim insomnia a
prey,
That weird elusive being e'er
could mark?

Who has not raised his window in
dismay
And blindly cast some weapon
through the dark ?





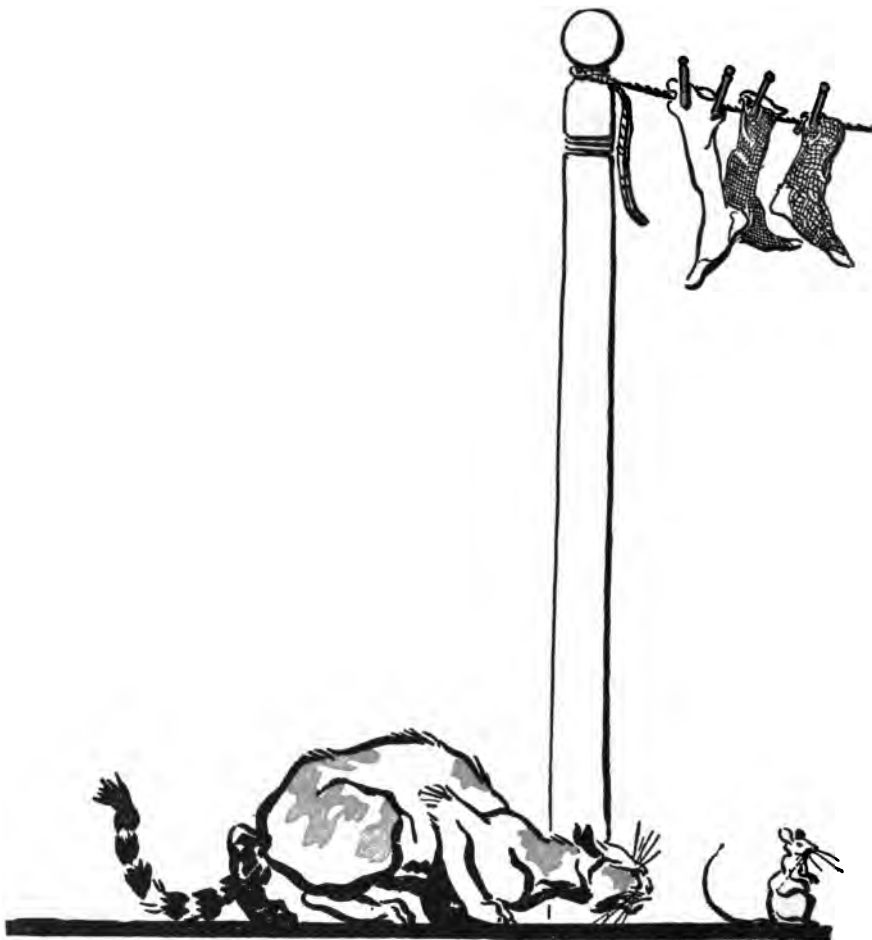


The
Cat's
Elegy

XVII

YET on some pavement, soon
or late, there lies
The cat who tortures slum-
ber while she prowls;
While from the tomb the voice of
Nature cries,
As some small urchin imitates her
howls.







The
Cat's
Elegy

XVIII

BUT Requies Cat, now that
she is dead
(Nine times she died, and
therefore quite deceased)
Approach and read (with friends to
hold thy head)
This touching tribute to the
little beast.






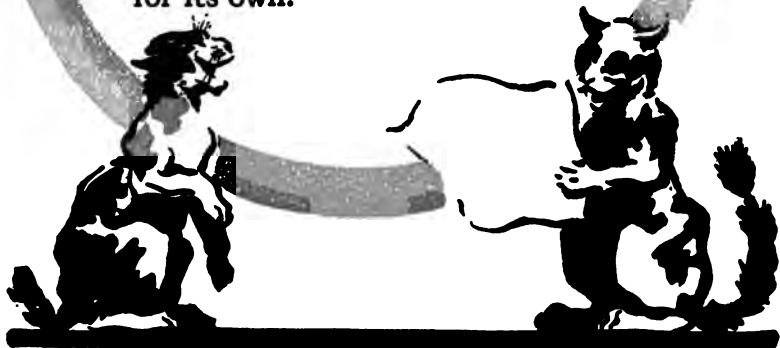


The
Cat's
Elegy

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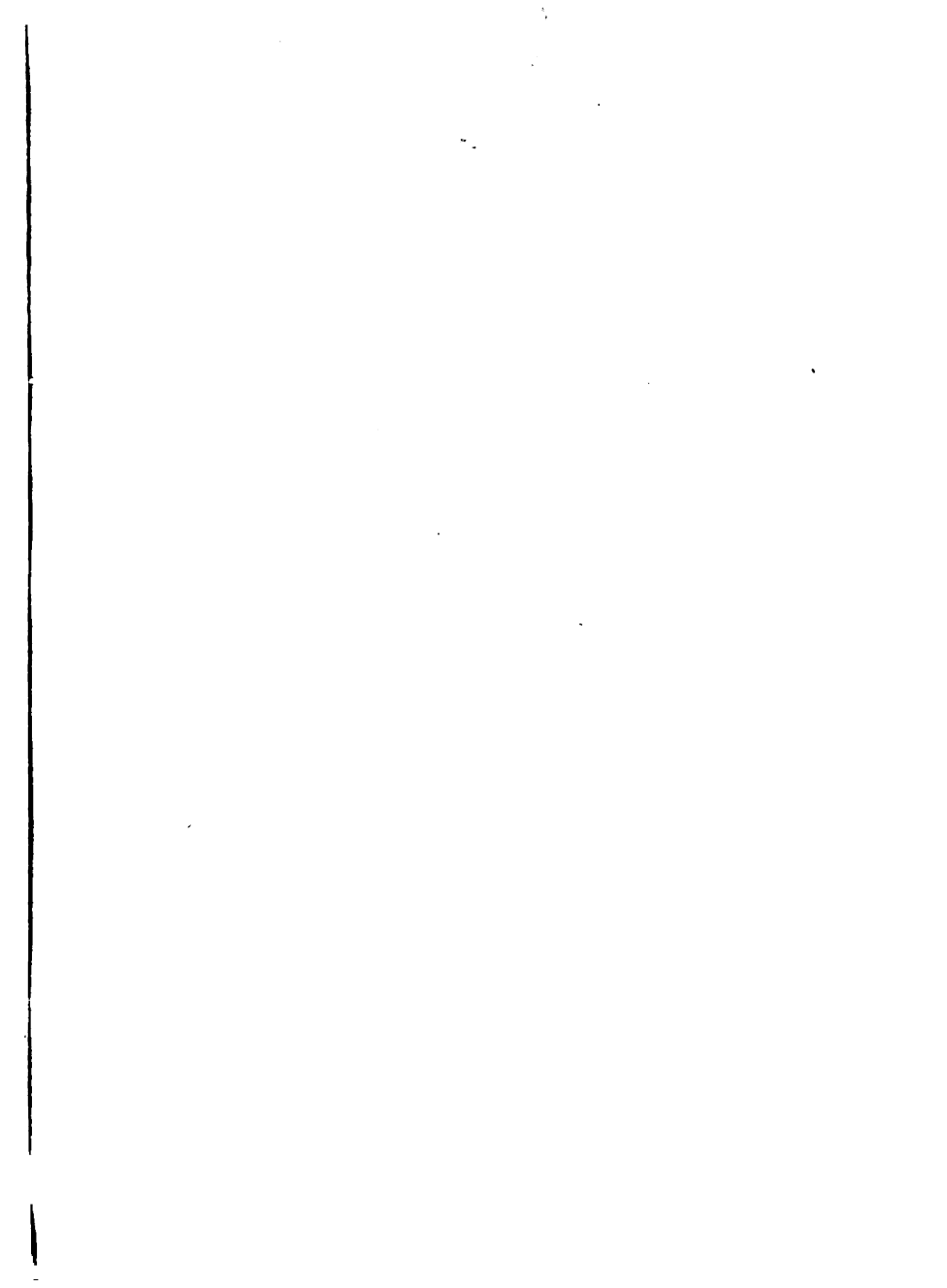


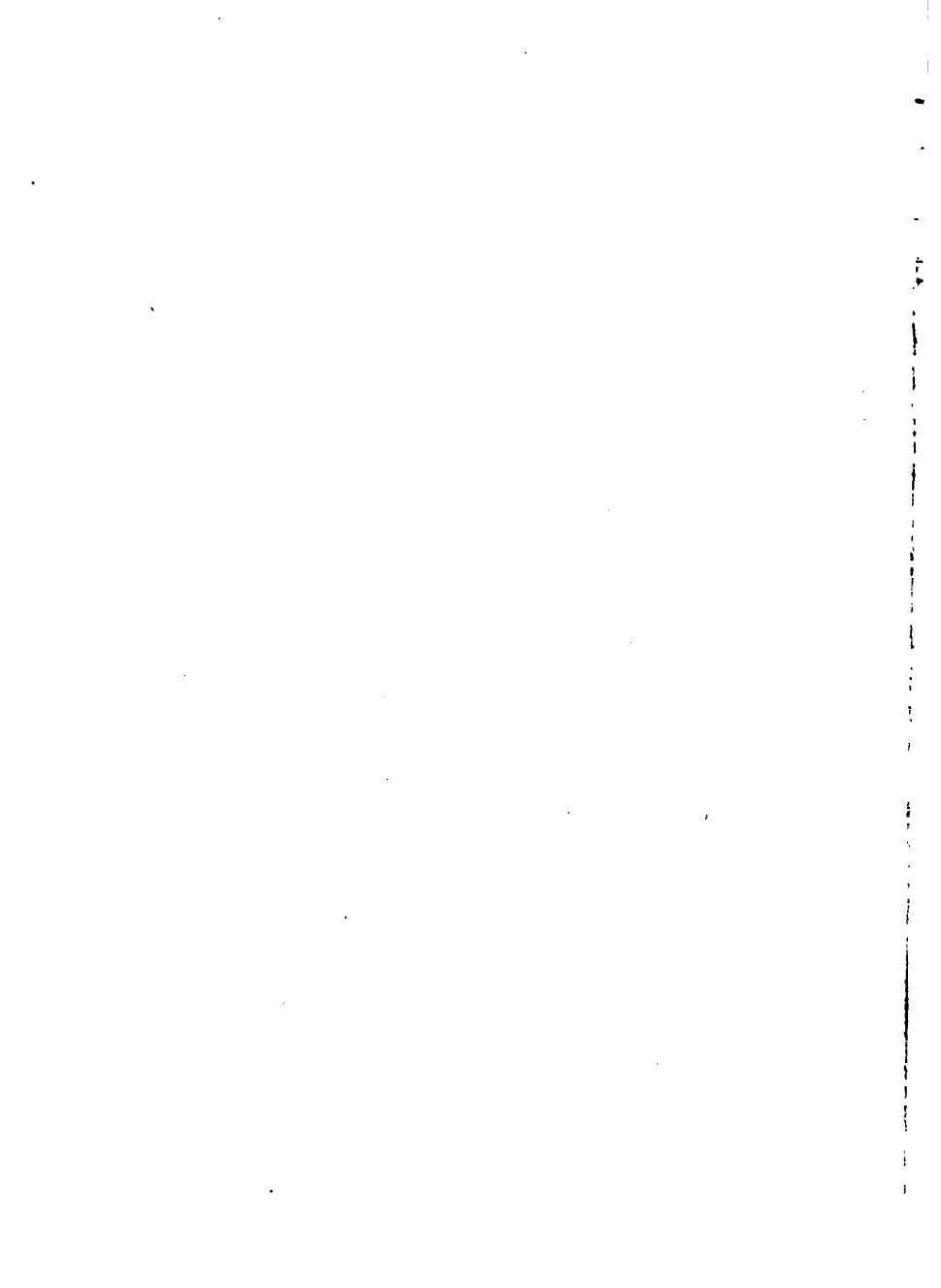
HERE lies poor Puss, with
collar unbedight,
A homeless cat, a thing of
skin and bone,
Full-throated rose her swan song on
the night,
And now the dust-heap claims her
for its own.

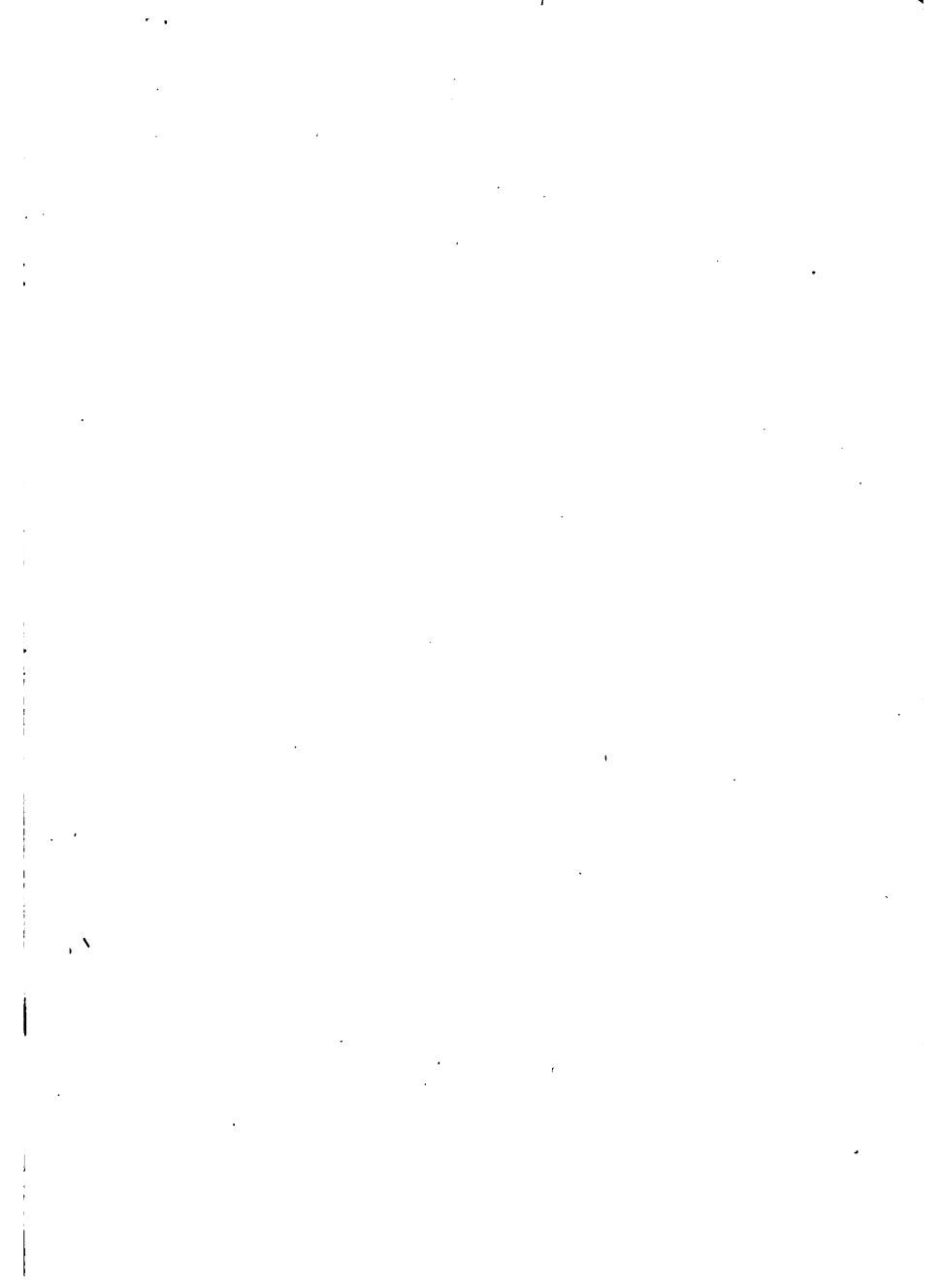


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